THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST

DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF JUDAISM AS A RELIGIOUS CIVILIZATION, TO THE UPBUILDING OF ISRAEL'S ANCIENT HOMELAND, AND TO THE FURTHERANCE OF UNIVERSAL FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE.

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PUBLISHED BY

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF JUDAISM

15 West 86th Street, New York

THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST

is published bi-weekly from September to June by the Society for the Advancement of Judaism, 15 West 86th St., New York City. Subscription $1.00 a year. Application for entry as second class matter is pending.

Why "Reconstructionist"?

NOWADAYS, when people do not read but run, the choosing of a name for any new movement or idea is important. There may be nothing in a name until you put something into it. But once a name becomes identified with certain specific purposes, it is wisdom, when you have grown to new purposes, to find a new name rather than torture new meanings out of the old name.

The movement in American Jewish life known as Conservative Judaism has committed itself to dealing with the problem of Judaism as a problem of religion only. This is an error, and it is the same error which is responsible for the failure of the Reform movement. It is a fundamental error, because it is an approach to the problem which, while seeking to bring order out of chaos, actually multiplies division. The moment you propose one mode of worship or one attitude toward observance for another, you automatically divide. These very things depend on taste, habit, and pressure of necessity. Hence, it is about them that our differences are most deeply rooted and therefore most irreconcilable. A religious party, by its very nature, declares itself against rapprochement in respect to such differences. A religious party is, by its very nature, interested in these differences only. The Conservatives are a religious party. How, then, can a Conservative movement be a unifying movement?

It will not be gainsaid that the problem of Jewish life is just this problem of unity. A solution to the problem of Jewish life depends upon finding, or making, a positive ideology which will enable both Orthodox and Reform, both believers and nonbelievers, to meet in common and to work together. It is only by conceiving Judaism as a civilization, and not as a general religious movement embracing many sects, that we will be able to construct such an ideology and *reconstruct the Jewish civilization.* To interpret Judaism as a civilization is to open the way for unity, because such interpretation enables us to seek the neutral factors of unity in language, the rebuilding of Palestine, and social relationships among Jews. In Judaism as a civilization, religion, the most important element in it, will flourish the better because it will not then be the subject of so much negative controversy.

The Society for the Advancement of Judaism, therefore, prefers to be considered a branch of the *Reconstructionist* movement in Jewish life, rather than of the Conservative. We are religiously allied with the Conservative party, but our interest is not in the organization of a religious party as such. In the Reconstructionist party, any Jewish group of any shade or quality of belief may find enough positive content to develop Jewish consciousness. Develop this Jewish consciousness, and you have Jewish unity.

— Editorial in the "S. A. J. Review,"
January 20, 1928.

THE
RECONSTRUCTIONIST

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EDITORIALS

The Reconstructionist Position

HOWEVER welcome any new Jewish periodical must be as a sign of Jewish awakening, it should justify its coming into existence on the ground of some distinctive policy or platform. Accordingly, in presenting this first issue of the RECONSTRUCTIONIST, the editors wish to state what is to be the philosophy of Jewish life by which they will be guided in their editorial comment and in their selection of articles and book reviews.

The uncertainty as to the meaning of Judaism, and the doubt as to its power to contribute to the enrichment of the life of the individual or to the promotion of human welfare generally, are ominous symptoms of the disintegration of Jewish life. The persistence and ubiquity of anti-Semitism have discredited for most Jews the policy of deliberate flight from Judaism, and have exposed the futility of assimilation. But pressure from without can result at best only in the continuance of Jews as a separate group. Such continuance, unillumined by the hope of a worthwhile future, can have no meaning or value for the Jews and can be nothing but a burden. The Jews should find joy in being Jews. Their Jewishness should be to them a source of enrichment and a means to the realization of what is best in them. To help bring this about is the task to which we apply ourselves.

We approach this task from the point of view of Judaism as a religious civilization. Other religious interpretations of Judaism, such as Reformism, Orthodoxy, Conservatism, are in their very nature divisive and thus afford no basis for cooperation with Jews who hold contrary opinions. We envisage Judaism as the proper concern of all Jews, religious and unreligious, conservative and radical, and we recognize the fact that all who take an affirmative attitude toward Judaism contribute to Jewish civilization, even if they deny that Judaism *is* a civilization, and by denying weaken the value of

their contribution.

In affirming that Judaism is a civilization we give emphasis to the fact that it includes many more interests than are commonly associated with the term religion, that it includes communal organization, language, law, art, mores, customs, as well as religion. Moreover, all of these elements are organically related to each other; to omit any of them is to distort Judaism. All of them are functions of the group life of Israel, and cannot be maintained unless we maintain the unity and integrity of the Jewish people and the continuity of its spiritual efforts.

We believe that the material and spiritual welfare of the Jews can be achieved only through Jewish communal organization which answers the vital needs of the Jews, and which is rendered articulate through a plastic and creative ideology. In pursuance of these objectives we favor the establishment of Jewish communal life in America, democratically administered and organized in such a manner as to include all Jews who wish to identify themselves with the Jewish people, regardless of what their personal philosophy may be.

In affirming that Judaism is a *religious* civilization, we recognize first, the historic fact that the God idea has dominated the entire pattern of Jewish life in the past, and that continuity with our past is impossible without giving to religion a position, if not of primacy, at least of *primus inter pares;* and secondly, the social fact that a mature and complete civilization is bound to find expression in the idea of God and in forms of religious worship in which the hopes and ideals of human life are rendered articulate. It is that very sense of need for religion that impels us to reinterpret the traditional beliefs in keeping with what for us must be a tenable world outlook, and to revise and develop the traditional usages in keeping with spiritual needs which we can genuinely experience.

We consider the establishment of Palestine indispensable to the life of Judaism in the diaspora. We seek to enable Jewish civilization so to root itself in the soil of Palestine as to make of that land the cultural center for Israel's intellectual and spiritual rebirth. We oppose any attempt to render Palestine the object of imperialist aims or the victim of private profit-seeking. We endorse every effort toward the establishment of a cooperative commonwealth in Palestine based upon social justice and social cooperation.

Realizing that Jewish life in the modern world cannot be self-sufficient, Jews are not exempt from the suffering and frustration incidental to the social crisis, nor are they free from the responsibility of sharing in the creative task of bringing order out of the present chaos. The proved inadequacy of ancient sanctions to prevent injustice, oppression and war is reflected in attitudes of cynicism, despair and ruthless self-seeking. We need a renewal of faith and a vision of new possibilities. We have need again to conceive of a Messianic age, a utopia toward which to direct all our strivings, something worthwhile to which we might look forward. Nothing less than a movement for a thoroughgoing change in our social and economic order can satisfy this need.

We are opposed to Fascism in every form. We object to any philosophy of government which seeks to curtail the rights of individuals to the free pursuit of personal salvation through participation in any religious or cultural activity, or through affiliation with any national or ethnic group. We see in economic imperialism and the competitive scramble for foreign markets the dominant cause of war in modern times, and we shall support all efforts looking to the establishment of such economic and social conditions and such international relationships as shall eliminate the known causes of war and increase the scope of mutual coopera-

tion for human welfare. In the meantime, recognizing the horror and irrationality of war as a means of adjusting conflicting interests, we shall support every effort looking to the perfection of machinery for the peaceful adjudication of such conflicts and to the utilization of such machinery as exists, wherever possible. Under no circumstances shall we give countenance or support to an imperialistic war that is designed to advance the interests of exploiting and oppressing classes.

We dare not be reconciled to an economic system that crushes the laboring masses and permits the existence of want in an economy of potential plenty. Social righteousness is possible only upon the establishment of a cooperative society, the elimination of the profit system, and the public ownership of all natural resources and basic industries. Until these objectives are achieved our sympathies and our support go to labor in its struggle with its employers for a more equitable distribution of the income of industry, and in the assertion of its right to organize for the protection of its interests without interference from its employers.

These are our principles. We pledge our best efforts to their advancement.

Zionism Is Not Enough

IN recent issues of the *New Palestine* the oft discussed question of Zionist policy has been brought to the fore again. This time the debate was started by Mr. Henry Montor in an article declaring that Zionism needed new content. Since Palestine cannot possibly absorb all the Jews, he argues, Zionism should have a message for the Jews in the diaspora indicating how they may solve some of their social and economic problems.

There must be something in the very nature of Zionism which is responsible for the persistence of the expectation that it bring the Jew redemption from all his troubles. Zionism is specifically the ancient yearning of the Jewish people to return to the land of its origin. But it is that yearning set to the key of the realistic processes of colonization and political negotiation instead of the passive waiting for a miracle. It thus points to a radical and drastic change that has taken place in the Jewish soul. Zionism properly understood implies that the Jew has definitely broken with the tendency to rely upon miracle for the improvement of his lot. For the few who can no longer think religiously, this spells the secularization of Jewish life. Those, however, whose religious instincts are not completely atrophied manage to reconcile the working of the divine in human life with the exercise of initiative, resourcefulness and cooperation. But whichever way we look at it, Zionism is tantamount to a spiritual revolution in the Jew's conception of salvation and of the methods of attaining it. This is why many Zionists regard Zionism as a panacea.

But it is a mistake to assume that Zionism can furnish not only the strategy of revolution in Jewish life but also the plan of reconstruction which must follow. When it comes to constructive effort, Zionism cannot and should not attempt more than to mobilize all Jewish energies and resources for the upbuilding of Palestine. When we consider the limited forces with which the Zionist organization has to operate, it would be quixotic to call upon it to engage in the organization of communal life. As for developing social and economic programs, the opportunity of experimenting with them in Palestine as at present constituted is far too limited to make it possible for Zionism to compete with the social and economic *isms* of the day.

This must by no means be interpreted as advocating that Zionists hew to the line of financial and political activities. Such a policy would be nothing less

than suicidal. On the contrary, the task of supplying the rationale for the movement and of making clear the significance of Palestine for Jewish life everywhere is an integral and indispensable part of Zionist activity. We greet with deep satisfaction the effort which is to be launched at the National Conference on Palestine this month to secure a fund of $100,000 for Zionist education and propaganda. Given the right people to conduct the campaign, it will enrich Jewish thought and action with social values of high import. But that is as far as the Zionist organization should go, if it is not to spend itself on numerous tasks which would be begun only to be abandoned.

Where then should Jews turn for guidance in their perplexities and relief from the many troubles that beset them? The answer is: to whatever organizations they already possess, or to new ones if there is need for them. If the existing organizations are inadequate, why not make them adequate? To be sure, the only time communal and institutional agencies will meet the problems of Jewish life in an affirmative and constructive spirit will be when they are dominated by the same philosophy that produced Zionism. But that does not mean that those agencies must be absorbed by Zionism. If Zionists were to assume responsibility and leadership in the relief, cultural and religious institutions, or if those who hold positions of responsibility in those institutions were Zionists who understood the implications of Zionism, we would witness a renascence of Jewish life in this country. But unfortunately some of the outstanding Zionists rationalize their lack of interest in the synagogue, in federation, and in Jewish education by regarding as chimerical the hope of Jewish survival outside Palestine. What Zionists must learn to realize is that *Zionism it not enough.* The building of a Jewish national home will have a creative effect upon Jewish life here and everywhere, provided it be undertaken as integral to the whole of Judaism, in the sense of a large, comprehensive, developing religious civilization. If Jews are ever to have a social and economic program that will captivate the imagination of the young, it will have to come not from Zionism, but from Zionistic Judaism.

An Exposé of American Pogromism

IN a series of nine issues, the *New Masses,* the Communist weekly, published the findings of one John L. Spivak who quotes chapter and verse from letters, interviews, official documents, etc., to prove that Fascist, 100% American, anti-Communist societies are "plotting America's pogroms." These sensational revelations, involving many prominent Americans, have been received variously by our people. Some Jews refuse to believe that anti-Semitism on a large scale could ever exist in this country. In fact, they assume that as good Americans it is their duty to do so. But refusing to face realities does not abolish them. Nor is patriotism the gainer by wish fulfillment.

There are others, however, who recognize the possibility of virulent anti-Jewish agitation but insist that Mr. Spivak exaggerates. Shall we therefore wait until things are as bad as Mr. Spivak says they are now before we recognize the need for action? Granted that some of Mr. Spivak's statements are overdrawn, what we know of the progress of anti-Semitism during the last fifteen years should make us realize that it can not be long before the rapidly racing realities overtake his "exaggerations."

Still others concede the truth of the charges made but are resentful that the investigation into the "Hate-the-Jew" movement should have emanated from Communists. These people fear that if the defense of Jewish rights is associated in people's minds with Com-

munism, Jewish rights will suffer. The *New Masses*, they say, should be reprimanded; Mr. Spivak is doing us more harm than good by his solicitude.

Instead of resenting the source of these startling revelations, American Jews should be grateful that there is at least one non-Jewish movement which is inherently opposed to anti-Semitism as a social evil to be eradicated. Whether we agree with Communism or not, we must honestly concede that it is the only movement which does not talk about anti-Semitism in the vague terms of "instinct" or "prejudice", the only cause that attempts to face the economic and social conditions that make for anti-Semitism. Its solution may not be acceptable, but its program brings to light every manifestation of anti-Jewishness. For the Communists anti-Semitism is as great a danger as it is for the Jews. They regard anti-Semitism as sand in the eyes of the people, as definitely anti-revolutionary. They can therefore be relied upon to uncover the truth about anti-Semitism, and it is folly for us to be finicky. It does not matter that Mr. Spivak is more interested in the revolution than he is in the Jews, or that he loves not the Jews more but capitalism less. Facts are facts, and it is high time American Jews faced them.

Challenging Figures

RECENT reports of the Bureau of Internal Revenue covering ten months of the present administration and six of the NRA record the continuance through the period covered of the tragic tendency for the rich to grow richer and the poor poorer.

These are the significant facts: an increase in the net income of corporations during the year 1933 over that of 1932 amounting to $654,502,697 accompanied by a decrease in the income of individuals amounting to $339,845,777; an increase in the number of individuals with incomes of $25,000 or more, accompanied by a decrease in the total income of those receiving less than $25,000; an increase in the number of incomes of $1,000,000 or more from 20 to 46, accompanied by a decrease in total wages and salaries amounting to $567,000,000, of which $389,000,000 was in the class of incomes under $5,000.

It is generally acknowledged both by protagonists and opponents of the New Deal that it represents an earnest attempt to preserve our capitalistic order by remedying its more glaring defects. If it fails, some collectivist form of social economy, whether Fascist or Socialist, must prevail. It is this which gives point to the figures that reveal the failure of the administration up to January, 1933, even to approximate its objective of a more equitable distribution of income. To be sure, defenders of the New Deal interpret the figures in the light of the fact that profits usually advance more rapidly than wages in the recovery from a depression and they claim that wages will catch up later. We hope that they are right, but we doubt it.

We have yet to be convinced that gross inequality of income is not an inherent evil of a profit economy. Inherent in the system is the effort to enhance profits by the exploitation of scarcity and, if necessary, by the creation of artificial scarcity. This is an evil that the New Deal has intensified rather than mitigated. The trade agreements in restraint of competition and limiting output, which, under the N.R.A. codes are given a quasi-legal status, are evidence of this tendency, as is also the farm policy of ploughing under. Organized labor seeks, reasonably enough under existing conditions, to preserve its own scarcity value through the closed shop. But how about the unemployed? If they seek jobs, they compete to cheapen labor; if they live on a dole, they are accounted worthless paupers. There is

no way of maintaining a scarcity value for labor. The workers still have occasion to cry, as in Thomas Hood's day, "Oh God! that bread should be so dear and flesh and blood so cheap!"

For the present, employers find it more profitable to support the idle in their idleness on a bare subsistence standard than to employ them at a decent wage to produce more goods. They can never give labor enough to purchase back its own product since the fixed charges of capital constitute a first claim on income. Eventually, however, employers will grow tired of supporting the idle through taxes. The alternative will then be forced labor on the employers' own terms, which means virtual slavery, or else a social revolution. The first alternative spells Fascism; the second may mean Communism. Before the choice between the two becomes inevitable, there is still time for the government to veer to the left, to redeem the natural resources of the country, to take over its basic industries and to begin producing for use rather than for profit, in abundance rather than in scarcity.

Don't Fall for Jabotinsky

VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY, leader of the Revisionist movement, is coming to America to tour this land on behalf of the Zionist party which he heads. American Jewry has rarely had the opportunity to act as host to a more brilliant guest. Jabotinsky is a skillful journalist and a gifted orator who expresses himself with equal eloquence in several languages. He is magnetic, energetic, persuasive, fluent, vivid—and dangerous.

The rabbis of the Talmud were wont to say, *"L'fum hurfa shabeshta,* the greater the brilliance, the greater the mistake." In Jabotinsky this epigram finds classic illustration. Had he been an incompetent, he could safely be disregarded. He is, however, a scintillating personality who has devoted himself to the propagation of a vicious idea.

The Revisionism for which Jabotinsky is the eloquent protagonist is on the surface an innocent program. It demands the largest possible Jewish immigration into Palestine so that a Jewish majority may be established in the immediate future. To attain these objectives it calls for a determined stand by the Zionist world against the policy of the British government which, it must be admitted, has been scarcely helpful to Jewish aspiration in Palestine. So far, so good. No loyal Zionist can quarrel with these propositions.

But the Revisionist goes further. That the Jewish homeland may be built with all possible speed, capital must flow into the country. If Jewish labor in Palestine is highly organized, if socialistic forms of colonization are encouraged, and if the industrialist must pay high wages, the investor will avoid the land. The Revisionist argues then that the economy of Palestine must be so ordered as to encourage the entrance of capital, and labor must for the time being suppress its party interests for the purpose of making Palestine attractive to pioneer industrialists. The whole Revisionist case boils down to this: let Palestine be built first without regard to social forms; later, when the Jewish state is secure, it will be time to correct social abuses, such as the exploitation of the laboring classes.

Only the naive and ingenuous soul could be hoodwinked by this appeal to Jewish patriotism, which is ultimately only a false front for special economic interests. It is easy to understand why the industrialists of Palestine and its large plantation owners are supporters of Revisionism. It offers them a unique instrument for the breaking of the powerful Labor Federation which is struggling to maintain decent wage standards.

No movement in contemporary Jewish life is so fraught with peril as that for which Jabotinsky speaks. If he has his way, labor which is the backbone of Jewish effort in the homeland will lose its humanizing hold on Palestinian economy. The great cooperative efforts and communes which the Labor Federation has sponsored and which have made Palestine a laboratory for social progress will be frustrated. Let no one be deceived by the Revisionist's protest —a Jewish state first and social reform later. If the abuses of western capitalism enter into Palestine they will be as difficult to dislodge there as in any other land.

Jabotinsky and his Revisionism are thus the tools of economic reaction. They are also the betrayers of the great Zionist vision. It has always been part of the Zionist dream that the Jew in Palestine might build a social order which should be a true expression of his ethical idealism, which should avoid the sins of western economies, which should be a cooperative society rather than a competitive one. In Palestine the Jew has a unique chance to build a world *ab ovo;* he is not hampered by the momentum of old orders. He can, if he but wills, make Palestine an expression of the best social ideals for Judaism. It is this vision which Revisionism threatens to destroy.

Jabotinsky will doubtless find an audience. We assure our readers that he will speak glibly, forcefully, eloquently and persuasively. We warn our readers against him and his talents. He has put them at the service of the powers of reaction. He must not win an American following lest he destroy the most significant Jewish achievements in Palestine and blast forever that social vision which broadens Zionism from the effort of one people to preserve itself into a service of all mankind.

Education in Palestine and America

THE recent departure of Dr. Alexander M. Dushkin for Palestine, to assume charge of the organization of a department of education in the Hebrew University, is fraught with significance for Palestine and the diaspora. The establishment of that department marks another milestone in the progress of the Hebrew University toward becoming a vital, constructive influence in the life of Palestinian Jewry. The experiments which have been conducted under the auspices of the University, in its chemical laboratories and other scientific departments, promise to render the University an important factor in solving many problems which affect the physical development of the land. From the standpoint of public health work, the University will come to play an important role as soon as the Hadassah Medical School begins to function. But, culturally, the University has been in danger of remaining aloof and detached from the inner life of the people. There has been a gap between the University and the everyday life of the Jews in Palestine. That gap will now be closed by the concern which the University will show in the educational problems of the Palestinian Jewish youth. By fostering the kind of education which is suited to the needs of the land, it will help Palestine produce the type of Jews who, as Ahad Ha-Am hoped, might constitute the norm for Jews in the diaspora. That Dr. Dushkin has been chosen to head the new department is, indeed, assuring. His ability and experience as both educator and organizer qualify him eminently for that position, and are a guarantee that his department will be built on sound and progressive lines.

Dr. Dushkin leaves behind him a brilliant record. He gave twenty years of his life to the cause of Jewish education in this country. He was among the first group of six or seven young men who, under the inspiration and guidance of

Dr. Samson Benderly, devoted themselves to Jewish education as a calling. They were to assist Dr. Benderly in the pioneer effort to create, in the mind of American Jewry, a sense of communal responsibility for the Jewish training of the young, to supplant the haphazard efforts of Talmud Torah schools, Hebrew schools and Sunday schools which worked aimlessly and planlessly. Dr. Dushkin, as head of the Jewish education department of Federation in Chicago, did yeoman's service in bringing order into the Jewish religious schools of that city. He labored strenuously to convince Federation leaders of the importance of advancing sufficient funds to effect improvements in those schools. He had to overcome the atavistic and divisive tendencies in the community that resisted his efforts to coordinate their educational activities. He established a College for Jewish Studies for the training of teachers.

Then came the crash. After that, instead of forging ahead, he had to struggle hard to hold the ground he had gained. The assimilationists among the leaders of Federation tried their utmost to oust Jewish education from the Federation budget. Though not successful, they did contrive to check the growth of that communal interest without which Jewish education cannot attain any worthwhile results. So that those who have been engaged in the spiritual adventure of building up a Jewish educational system in this country will surely miss Dr. Dushkin. While rejoicing with Palestine in its new acquisition, they undoubtedly feel more keenly the burden of their responsibilities here.

But perhaps Dr. Dushkin at his new post many continue to contribute to their efforts. Every step in the reconstruction of Jewish life in Palestine must have its repercussions in the diaspora. We hope that Dr. Dushkin's achievements may help to inspire American Jews with a deeper understanding of the possibilities of Jewish education.

What of Biro-Bidjan?

THE convocation of the first congress of Jewish Soviets in Biro-Bidjan on December 11 marks another milestone in the development of that territory as an autonomous Jewish republic within the Soviet union. The Jewish population in Biro-Bidjan is still small, numbering only some 15,000 souls. But the Russian government is behind the project and it will no doubt be pushed with the zeal and the tempo characteristic of the Soviets. What should be our attitude towards it?

We certainly cannot follow the ICOR in regarding it as that transcendental event toward which all of Jewish history has moved. Aside from the fact that Biro-Bidjan has no kinship with the Jewish past, we must remember that there, as in the rest of Russia, Hebrew will continue to be persecuted and the Jewish religion in all formulations will continue to be taboo. The focal point in our efforts to reconstruct Jewish life on a healthier basis must remain the establishment of a labor commonwealth in Palestine.

But while insisting on the primacy of Palestine, we should give our support to Biro-Bidjan as well. For Palestine, certainly at this time, cannot absorb all Jews who must flee the countries of their present residence. Already we hear of 1,500 Polish Jews leaving for Biro-Bidjan and that thousands of others, harrowed by the effects of the crisis and the economic anti-Semitism of the Polish government, are prepared to follow them. Shall we not avail ourselves of what promises to offer social and economic salvation to thousands of our brethren persecuted throughout Europe? In its own way, Biro-Bidjan also presents certain cultural possibilities. An autonomous mass settlement of Jews, living as a classless society, with the Yiddish language dominating in factory, office, school, and government, is bound to give birth to significant expressions in

arts and letters. And who knows but that as time goes on and partisan passions have cooled, Jewish life in Biro-Bidjan, reaching out for self-completion, may yet rise to embrace what is vital in its own past.

Is a Religious Training Essential to Character?

By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

IT must be made clear at the outset that our concern here is with the formal religious training in the school and the home, and not with that informal spiritual guidance which introduces the child into the profundities of religious thinking and action. A religious training which can be imparted in schools and through direct teaching is necessarily more specific and more limited. It would clarify matters greatly, therefore, if the true scope of religious training were clearly grasped, for parents would not then demand the impossible of their children. *Religious training is basically the inculcation of a particular tradition which belongs to a particular religious group.* The question: "is a religious training essential to character?" should be understood to mean: is a training in tradition essential to character?

We often wonder why after the thousands of years of moral and religious teaching of the young, the character of the human being has undergone little, if any, improvement. Our surprise, however, is due to a wrong assumption with regard to past educational effort. We take for granted that parents and teachers have always wanted to foster good character in the child, that their one ambition was to make of him a self-reliant, dependable, integrated person. We imagine that though they may not have known how to train the child to react ethically to every situation with which life might confront him, they must have realized the importance of cultivating in him those traits and habits which would impel him to give a good account of himself under all circumstances. If we have entertained any such notions, we have been laboring under an illusion.

The truth is that ethical character as a conscious objective of education is of comparatively recent date. The very ideal implied in such an objective was swept into current thinking with the tide of all those revolutionary changes which mark off the ancient from the modern world. It displaced a radically different ideal which had dominated education from time immemorial, the ideal of obedience to established authority and conformity to accepted standards. It was not so long ago that obedience was considered the quintessence of virtue and the surest means of the achievement of life's purpose. All educational effort was centered not upon the development of self-determining, integrated, autonomous personality but upon the inculcation of the habit of obedience to authority and its established norms.

Our ancestors were continually exhorted to obey traditional laws and to conform to traditional precepts. Our Sages accounted that moment in our people's career the apogee of spiritual greatness when, after having heard from Moses "all the ordinances" of the Lord, they exclaimed in unison, "We will do and obey." The attitude of Neo-Orthodoxy in modern times has reiterated and reemphasized this point of view. Samson Raphael Hirsch, its leading pro-

tagonist against the rising tide of Reformism, says (in the fifth of the Letters of ben Uziel): "'Good' should be for him (*i.e.*, for the Jew) only that which agrees with this Divine Will and with the disposition fixed for objects by the Divine wisdom; 'Evil' only that which stands in opposition to these principles." No one who is at all familiar with Hirsch's writings has any doubt as to what he means by conformity to the divine will. He makes it quite clear that this will is expressed in the Torah, the oral as well as the written. Conformity for Hirsch means definitely conformity with tradition. These and these alone may define the ethical obligation of the Jew. More recent Orthodox writers have never challenged this view.

The Catholic church likewise exalts the ideal of obedience. On the subject of obedience the Catholic encyclopedia has this to say in an article by Joseph F. Delaney: "Amongst the moral virtues, obedience enjoys a primacy of honor. The reason is that the greater or lesser excellence of a moral virtue is determined by the greater or lesser value of the object which it qualifies one to put aside in order to give oneself to God. Now amongst our various possessions, whether goods of the body or goods of the soul, it is clear that the human will is the most intimately personal and most cherished of all. So it happens that obedience, which makes a man yield up the most dearly prized stronghold of the individual soul in order to do the good pleasure of his Creator, is accounted the greatest of the moral virtues."

Protestantism, having come into existence in response to some of the forces that have transformed the medieval into the modern pattern, has been inclined to reckon somewhat with the claims of personality, but mainly in the domain of religion, or in the relationship between man and God. In all other relationships of man to his environment, Protestantism has glorified the virtue of obedience, except that it has substituted the ordinances of the state for the decrees of the visible church. This tendency in Protestantism is responsible for the deification of the state, though, no doubt, economic and political forces have contributed their share to the conception of the state as the supreme authority in the life of the individual.

It is interesting to find an advanced and modern social scientist like Emile Durkheim so dominated by the nationalist psychology that it colors his entire conception of character. He stresses the importance of a "spiritualized patriotism" as providing the principal objective of moral faith. He refuses even to subordinate the fatherland to humanity, which he considers as a purely imaginary being. No wonder then that for him "to act well is to obey well," and that "the moral rule is entirely a command and nothing else." Perhaps the fact that Durkheim was a French assimilated Jew had something to do with the exaggerated emphasis upon loyalty to the state.

Nevertheless, in spite of sentimental relapses into fundamentalism and the passing madness of dictatorships in national life, the basic trend of modern times is to question tradition and to challenge authority. In consequence of this skeptical attitude toward tradition and this revolt against authority, the ideal of obedience has had to yield to the ideal of character. Character or ethical personality implies that the individual chooses the purposes and goals which are to direct his conduct because of their intrinsic rationality and usefulness. To the extent that a man acts upon purposes set up by others, however wise and well-meaning they be, he lacks individuality or character. By the same token, tradition can no longer be the final arbiter of right or wrong. Tradition itself must now be subject to criticism on the basis of criteria outside itself, criteria derived from the tested experience of mankind and supplemented by the continued searching after the truth. Such criteria function as part of character. If a traditional usage or an accepted be-

lief fails to measure up to these criteria, one who possesses ethical character should defy it, even at the risk of the most violent social disapproval.

Does this mean, then, that tradition is a dead weight on character? To answer this question we have to take into account some of the main social and psychological aspects of tradition.

II

Tradition is usually defined as the body of usages and beliefs transmitted from generation to generation. This definition, though true, does not give the slightest hint of the extent to which tradition has functioned as a civilizing agency in the evolution of mankind. In the first place, it takes no note of the fact that the generations which transmit and the generations which receive the traditional usages and beliefs belong to the same social group, whether it be clan, tribe, nation or church. In the second place, it ignores the role of tradition in arousing in members of the group an awareness of the group as a social unit whose life extends both into the past and into the future and embraces the dead, the living and the unborn.

This awareness of the group transforms the life of the individual from a solitary and purposeless existence to a highly conscious striving to surmount his physical and psychic limitations. The stories which the poets narrate, the laws which the elders and the judges quote, the wisdom which the sages teach, and the customs and folk-ways which the people observe enlarge the mental horizon of the individual. They extend the scope of his desires and interests to the furthest limits of the society to which he belongs. Through them he identifies himself with the generations of his people that preceded his birth, with those that will live after his death, and with kinsmen, compatriots, co-religionists, as the case may be, whom he has never seen and never expects to meet.

Thus, through tradition, man acquires a sense of social responsibility which reaches out beyond the immediate members of his family. "Kindness" loses its original meaning of recognition of kinship or kind-ship and comes to imply a sense of sympathy felt to be appropriate to all the members of one's people. Through the same medium man learns the meaning of loyalty which impels him to give priority to the welfare of the group over his own. Since it is tradition that elicits such traits as loyalty and social responsibility, it is folly to think of dispensing with it in any education of which character development is an objective.

The foregoing considerations enable us to realize the mistake of those modernists who in their eagerness to dissociate character education from mere training in obedience and conformity to traditional standards, deprecate all efforts at imparting any specific religious education. It is by no means uncommon for parents who are in revolt against a hide-bound traditionalism to say, "I don't want my child to be indoctrinated. When he grows up he will choose for himself what religious principles and practices, if any, he may feel to be important for him." Such parents are not aware that it is only by means of tradition that it is possible to initiate in the life of the child the process of moral and spiritual evaluation. The individual's growth to mature and autonomous ethical personality is analogous to his growth in the power to use speech for purposes of self-expression. We do not delay his learning to speak until he invents a language of his own, or chooses from among all existing languages. We naturally transmit our own vernacular to him. That is, in a sense, tradition. Similarly it would be absurd to keep away from him the knowledge of the principal norms and standards of human society and of prevailing ideas about life as a whole, which constitute the moral and religious tradition. Even if

we do not send him to a religious school, we still impart some worth-while ideals by revealing to him, deliberately or otherwise, our hopes and expectations with regard to him. But just as we supplement the child's ability to speak in the vernacular with a systematic school training in grammar, rhetoric and literature, so we should deem it desirable and important to supplement these vague, casual and more or less inarticulate impartings of our higher ideals with a systematized presentation of them in the religious school.

III

But not only is tradition important because it initiates in the child the process of moral and spiritual evaluation; it is also important because only through the medium of his religious and moral tradition does the child learn to recognize the group which is vitally concerned with his self-fulfillment as a human being, whether it is the Jewish people or Church. Most individuals belong to a number of different social groups, political, economic or cultural, with which they identify themselves because of certain interests that they share in common. The same individual may thus be identified with the American nation, the capitalist class, the Order of Free Masons, an international sports organization. But not all these groups mean the same to him; not all contribute equally to his realization of the highest potentialities of his nature. It is important for him to recognize which group it is that is vitally concerned in his efforts to achieve the maximum harmonious fulfillment of his personal and social desires and purposes. Such fulfillment is what is implied by the term salvation.

"Salvation" is not a popular term in modern parlance because it has been associated with an other-worldly outlook that modern man has for the most part discarded and discredited. But it need not necessarily retain this connotation. The other-worldly churches, despairing of the possibility of achieving salvation in this life, project it into an imagined life after death. But we need not leave it in that locale. The thirst for the achievement of an autonomous integrated personality, with purposes in harmony with one another and consistent with man's social nature, exists as well for people who do not expect a life after death as for those who do. They, too, are in quest of salvation though they do not believe in a celestial paradise of the blessed. From the point of view of character education, it is of vital importance that the individual know what group it is that is most helpful to him in his quest of salvation as an achievable goal in this life.

Now, judging from the trend of human evolution we may say that, next to the sheltering solicitude of the home, the human being requires the sheltering solicitude of the larger fellowship to which the family unit belongs. This larger fellowship it is through which the family is validated and given status.

This larger fellowship, whether church or nation, is needed to stimulate in the individual the striving after personality in its most comprehensive sense, and to help him achieve it. Its traditional ideals and standards imply certain expectations which express the hopes which it cherishes with regard to its members and their behavior. The individual feels that to fall below certain ethical requirements means a betrayal of that group. He cannot, because of his self-identification with the group, indulge in such conduct without feeling that in disappointing these expectations he is disappointed with himself. On the other hand, behavior which expresses loyalty to the highest hopes that the group may cherish for its members fills the individual with a deep satisfaction that frequently makes an act of self-sacrifice the most thrilling and glorious experience in a man's life. That element of expectation which a fellowship expresses through its tradition is, there-

fore, among the most important creative influences on character. Very few people, if any, can forego the stimulus of that expectation.

IV

Finally, for the Jew, tradition is called upon to play a part in character education which it is not required to play for most Gentiles. The fact that each one of us, in addition to being an American is identified as a Jew, means that we and our children belong to a minority group. To belong to a minority is always to be at a disadvantage, since such groups are subject to attack. They are usually maligned, discriminated against and treated as the scape-goats for the sins of the majority. It is unnecessary to point out how we Jews have always suffered the usual fate of minorities. One need only remember that, integral to the main purpose of the Christian tradition, which is to exalt the personality of Jesus as the son of God, is the denunciation of the Jews for having rejected him. The Jew has thus come to figure in the consciousness of the Christians as the anti-Christ, as the incarnation of the evil in the world. Although in the liberal churches this conception of the Jew has been somewhat mitigated, it still functions in the Catholic and Fundamentalist church traditions.

In recent years there has been added the German brand of Jew-hatred, known as anti-Semitism. With the weakening of the authority of the churches and the growth in many of them of more liberal sentiments toward the Jew, the antagonism toward the Jewish people as a minority group has found new sanctions more appropriate to the spirit of the times. In an era which worships science even when it does not understand it, Jew-hatred has taken on a pseudo-scientific form. An elaborate theory of races was devised to rationalize German pretentions to superiority, and to stigmatize the Jew as inherently inferior and degenerate and as exercising a corrupting and demoralizing influence on any civilization that shelters him.

It is only natural for the Jew to be harassed to a point of mental anxiety and self-contempt by the world's antagonism. He cannot help asking himself for an explanation of the almost universal antipathy that confronts the Jews wherever they exist in considerable numbers, or, as in Nazi Germany, (which never had a very large proportion of Jews), where they occupy positions of influence or eminence. The Jew searches critically his own behavior or that of his fellow-Jews for some clue to the situation. He seeks a defense against his foes by a sort of protective coloring, adopting such manners and attitudes as will make him inconspicuous among them. Or he may adopt the very opposite policy and assume a self-assertive truculence, flaunting his Jewishness where there is no occasion to do so, in order to conceal from others and from himself the hurt to his pride and self-respect that they have inflicted upon him. In a book by Theodore Lessing entitled *"Jüdischer Selbsthass"* published not long ago there is a tragic picture of what happens to Jews who are brought up without a tradition.

A tradition which would present in dignified fashion the case of the Jewish people is absolutely indispensable as a therapeutic to Jewish character. The Jew must be enabled to look at Jewish life not through the eyes of a hostile civilization, but as it has expressed itself through the authentic voices of its own heroes, sages, poets, prophets and leaders in the various stages of its development. No civilization when viewed in the light of its own tradition can ever lead to feelings of disgust and revulsion. On the contrary, it always selects for preservation and transmission to posterity those aspects of its life and thought which would bind its children to it by ties of love and loyalty. Only the transmission of the Jewish tradition can save Jewish character from inner conflict and moral disintegration, stifled as

the Jew is by the atmosphere of antipathy and contempt in which anti-Semitism has enveloped him as in a poison gas.

V

Thus far we have seen why Jews cannot do without tradition. We shall now state why they cannot do with tradition as it is, if it is to figure in the character training of the young. As a general principle we would say that tradition must be so modified as to conform to the highest intellectual and social ideals which are the outcome of human experience as a whole.

This principle demands, in the first place, that we recognize that tradition in the concrete is always a tradition of some particular group. The beliefs of a tradition are not abstract ideas about things in general but specific doctrines about events, heroes and institutions which have played a part in the struggles against rival groups. Rivalries which have long been dead are recalled as a background for the heroic events and figures which are needed to give substance to the collective memory and incentive to courage and martyrdom. The Jewish tradition before the period of the Enlightenment was organized and transmitted as a counter-claim to Christianity and Mohammedanism. These two religions appropriated for their respective fellowships the title of the elect of God and the exclusive promise of salvation. Jewish tradition likewise stressed the fact that the Jews were the chosen of God and that "all Israel will have a share in the world to come." Judaism thereby declared itself to be the only way to salvation.

All this must now be changed. Jewish tradition should no longer be transmitted as a claim to superiority. Its value to the Jew today, as we have already shown, is not dependent on its asserting its superiority over other traditions. These traditions are not its rivals, since they cannot function for the Jewish people, and the Jewish tradition cannot function for the peoples or fellowships that they represent. Jewish tradition should now be transmitted as a complex of human values existing in their own right. Anyone who keeps a diary would not like to see it destroyed, though it may not begin to compare in literary and historical worth with that of Samuel Pepys. He values it because it is his own, because it reveals his own individuality. It is possible to cultivate a similar approach to our Jewish tradition. Whether good, bad, or indifferent from a moralizing standpoint, the heroisms and events, laws, struggles, tragedies, defeats, dreams, yearnings,—they are all what the people we belong to felt and experienced. Once communicated in this spirit, the Jewish tradition would supply a deep psychological need without having to prove that it is more glorious than that of any other people. The most obscure peoples in the world find the drama of their own career, the courage of their own heroes and the inspiration of their poets, enough reason for cherishing their tradition. Surely the Jewish people does not have to be ashamed of its tradition. That should be sufficient reason for cultivating it.

Secondly, instead of confining to our own Jewish fellowship the element of loyalty which is in our tradition, the tradition should be so interpreted as to yield a conception of universal loyalty. The late Josiah Royce gave an ethical interpretation of loyalty which is the only one that can make the historical particularistic traditions compatible with ethical character: "So be loyal to your own cause as thereby to serve the advancement of the cause of universal loyalty." Just as loyalty to one's own home naturally expresses itself in a loyalty to the ideal of home-life generally and in conduct consistent with the highest ethical interest in protecting the institution of the home from corrupting and disintegrating influences, so loyalty to one's own fellowship and the civilization

through which it functions, should result in a loyalty to all institutions that further human civilization and promote human welfare.

Thirdly, our tradition has to be restated in terms of the scientific world-outlook. As handed down to us, it comes from a pre-scientific era and in a form which brings it into conflict with scientific thought. In order to avoid the conflict between tradition and science, it is necessary honestly to recognize as products of the popular imagination all those elements in it that cannot be maintained as actual or historic fact. It is entirely gratuitous to resort to artificial methods of interpretation in order to harmonize tradition with science. Folklore and legend properly understood can themselves be shown to be repositories of implied historical truth, and of values and reactions to experience that are of permanent worth. The usages which in the tradition are conceived as divine commandments should be treated as human institutions, laws and mores intended to help man in his effort to achieve salvation. The religious rites or observances should be treated as folk-ways which carry with them an obligation like that of respect and good manners, the violation of which is an indication of boorishness. What the ancients termed "am ha-arazut" was essentially boorishness.

Finally, no tradition can be effective so long as it is merely a way of speaking. It presupposes a functioning group life, a visible environment, and other tangible evidences of collective interest and activity. This is why the Jewish renaissance in Palestine has become indispensable to the transmission of the Jewish tradition. In Palestine the landscape itself is redolent of traditional associations, every spot of earth is crowded with historic memories that awaken in the present generation a feeling of identity with the generations of the past. The calendar that regulates all the routines of the people's social and economic life takes cognizance of sabbaths and holidays, of historical anniversaries and contemporary events of national significance. Tradition is thereby integrated into the daily life of the Jewish people as it cannot anywhere else be integrated. In America about Christmas time, the Christian tradition is all-pervasive and expresses itself on all sides in visual symbols, even in the shop-windows of Jewish stores. Its force can be seen in the tendency of many Jews to display Christmas trees in their homes and to exchange Christmas presents. In Palestine, the Jewish tradition is no less pervasive and expresses itself as clearly to the eye of the observer. The mere consciousness of existence of such a center of Jewish creative activity in Palestine creates in Jews everywhere an enhanced awareness of their collective entity and their identity with the historic tradition of their people.

But even more immediate evidence of collective Jewish life is essential if Jewish tradition is to function in the diaspora. Jewish life must be reorganized on a communal rather than congregational basis. The congregation is too limited in its scope and too homogeneous in its personnel to create in any of its members a sense of the reality of the Jewish people. Nothing less than large-scale communal life can make the Jewish child feel that Jewish tradition is a necessary part of his education, that it helps in the process of adjusting him to his environment and contributes to his achievement of personality. Moreover, within that communal life, agencies must be created which will implement those ideals in the tradition that pertain to the manifold of human relationships. It will not do to confine its interest to the relations of the individual to the group and to God. The relationship between men and women, parents and children, husband and wife, employer and employe, buyer and seller, relationships involving questions as to the distribution of wealth, social justice, international rights—for all these there should be some kind of social machinery to put into effect the ideals transmitted by tra-

dition. Otherwise, the tradition is bound to remain a kind of mummified past, kept in sacred wrappings which crumble at the least contact with life.

If we approach our tradition in the spirit here suggested and deal with its beliefs and usages in accordance with the foregoing principles, we shall bring mental healing to the Jewish soul and enhance its life. But more than this, we shall, through this approach, tap a new source of social and spiritual energy that will contribute toward the strength which mankind now needs in its struggle against the besetting forces of darkness and the menace of universal cataclysm.

BOOK REVIEWS

Intolerance in the Name of God

"ALL IN THE NAME OF GOD," Everett R. Clinchy; The John Day Co., New York, 1934.

"INTOLERANCE," Winifred Ernest Garrison; Round Table Press, New York, 1934.

THE history of hate is not alone the story of human misery; it is the tragic and perplexing account of human irrationality. It is, of course, very illuminating to analyze, logically, the factors that have contributed to vicious expressions of intolerance and holocausts of religious and racial conflict. But in the end we must conclude that bigotry is one of the most devastating forms of insanity, in which the wellsprings of reason are dried up or deliberately clogged up, and which therefore expresses itself with such savage abandon of the most elemental human feeling and thought. Dr. Garrison, an editor of *The Christian Century* and Professor of Church History at the University of Chicago, in a clear and rapid account of the history of intolerance, adds to this fact the observation that there are recognizable techniques and courses of development which accompany this type of social disease, as in other forms of insanity. He is not sparing in the account of religious wars conducted by churches of his own faith. But his study of hatreds shows the complexity of the problem of intolerance, which will thrive not only on the deficiencies of religious institutions and leadership but, also with equal violence, when it exploits the political and economic discords of society.

Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, the apostle of the "good-will" movement in America, the director of the National Conference of Jews and Christians, presents a brief account of outrageous expressions of racial and religious animosities in America from early Revolutionary days until our very own. It is difficult to reconcile the lofty liberalism of the founders of American institutions, Roger Williams, Jefferson, Franklin, Washington and other leaders of political thought and action in early American life, with the burning of Catholic churches, the destruction of life and the religious qualifications for office-holding in many states of our union, until comparatively recent years. All this despite the basic statement of our constitution which guar-

antees the freedom of religious conviction without prejudice to the enjoyment of all the benefits of citizenship in our country.

Both Garrison and Clinchy indulge in a discussion of remedies. Each emphasizes the readiness of the priests of bigotry to use ignorance and distortion of facts to spread their deadly poison. They therefore advocate a greater measure of education which will disseminate the unique values of distinctive creeds and races, as well as the common interests which should humanize the relations between them. This reviewer was inclined to agree, in view of Dr. Garrison's own amazing lack of insight when he states "Judaism, as a nationality, has absolutely nothing except exaggerated memories of an ancient glory and the groundless hopes and ambitions of a relatively few contemporary Jews." Indeed, a lack of understanding is a most injurious influence which may be manifest even in those who ardently strive of "better understanding."

Each of our authors is further convinced that democracy grants and must insure the rights of minority groups to express and live the distinctive character of their religious or cultural patterns. But what shall be the extent of the heterogeneity of cultures which a democracy like the United States can absorb without sacrificing the essential unity of nationality? This is a pertinent and difficult question, but it is a hopeful sign that both Dr. Garrison and Dr. Clinchy maintain that true political and social freedom are inconceivable without the opportunities for heterogeneity. It thus becomes imperative that all the forces of society which wish to preserve this precious heritage of freedom should rally to a common defense against the forces of dogmatism and dictatorship, a defense of the rights of any group to live their cultural life without jeopardy to their rights as human beings in society.

LEON S. LANG.

Vital Statistics

"THE JEWS IN THE MODERN WORLD," Arthur Ruppin, with an Introduction by L. B. Namier; Macmillan & Co., New York, 1934.

WHEN Jews describe themselves as *luftmenschen*, they generally refer to their economic position. But that choice German idiom is equally applicable to Jewish thinking on the Jewish problem. Discussion of Jewish issues tends largely to be a matter of abstractions and generalities, with little or no basis in clearly determined actualities. Dates, names and statistics are simply disregarded. In part, this unbalanced emphasis on the abstruse represents an unfortunate carryover from the unreality of Talmudic debate. In part, however, it springs from the circumstance that even well informed Jews never knew the actual facts about Jewish life, that these data were unavailable to those who sought to discover them.

Dr. Ruppin, in *The Jews in the Modern World,* has made a distinct contribution to an intelligent understanding of the Jewish scene. He has collected and coordinated vast quantities of facts. He treats successively with the numbers, distribution, migration and natural increase of the Jews, with their economic life, their varying political positions, their health and hygiene, with elements of disintegration and reintegration in their group life and, last of all, with Zionism.

For all its stress on statistics, *The Jews in the Modern World* is no dull conglomeration of figures. The facts are fully as strange and intriguing as any fiction might be—and infinitely more informative. It is interesting to learn that cultural productivity in various Jewish communities has generally followed a rise in the Jewish population of that community; that in 1800 there were only two and one-half million Jews in the world, half of whom

lived in Poland. The interplay of birth rates and death rates, the effects of urbanization, economic shifts, experiments in agricultural settlement, all make fascinating reading. The section entitled "Disruptive Forces in Jewry" tells a story which should give any reader cause for meditation. The treatment of Zionism is brief but vivid.

Only in its first section is this book disappointing. Setting out on his discussion, Dr. Ruppin raises the question "Who Shall Be Called a Jew?" He then proceeds to demonstrate that neither religion, national unity nor racial purity offers an adequate criterion as to what constitutes Jewishness. His challenging question remaining unanswered, the reader is left in the unsatisfactory position of reading facts about he knows not whom. At this point, Dr. Ruppin might well have engaged in a discussion of theory. His failure to do so constitutes a serious omission.

As a whole, however, this very refusal to engage in speculation makes the book a refreshing experience in the concrete. It remains a monument of research, immensely informative. It offers to thoughtful Jews a firm basis of social data on which to stand in their thinking about themselves.

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